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THE RED STARS *V HYDRÆ* AND 277 OF BIRMINGHAM'S CATALOGUE.

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BY ROSE O'HALLORAN.

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Two crimson stars, now visible in the evening sky, are especially worthy of the notice of telescopic observers. Unlike hundreds of stars classed as red, which, in a steady atmosphere, have merely a pinkish-yellow hue, these orbs preserve their claim to redness under all conditions of visibility. The brighter of the two, *V Hydræ*, in R. A.  $10^h 46^m 17^s$  Decl.  $+20^\circ 40'$ , may be found (even with an opera-glass) west of  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  *Crateris*, with which it forms a triangle. Since the beginning of April, it has maintained a deep crimson color, though described as pale crimson, copper-red, and intensely red, by reliable observers in the past. At present it is of the seventh magnitude, and it is known to vary from the sixth to the ninth, though the period seems to be uncertain or irregular, being about 575 days, according to GOULD, but 653 days if the recent data of the *Companion to the Observatory* be correct. The last maximum having been predicted for October 25, 1896, in this ephemeris, the next may occur in the middle of August, when *V Hydræ* sets in sunlight, but its altitude will be sufficiently high for observation for some weeks yet. Spectroscopists describe the spectrum of this star as being strongly lined in the red and green, and class it as of the fourth type.

Another orb, unusually free from yellow light, is numbered 277, in BIRMINGHAM'S catalogue of red stars. Being in R. A.  $12^h 19^m 37^s$  Decl.  $+1^\circ 22'$  it may be found about  $2^\circ$  northeast of  $\eta$  *Virginis*. Fitly classed as crimson, it is recognized as a variable, with a range of from six and a half to eight and a half magnitude, though its period seems to be unknown. In numerous observations during the spring months of the last five years, I have failed to detect any variation greater than from about seven and a half to eight magnitude. It is considered that its spectrum is probably of the fourth type, and as it terminates in the green, this interesting orb may be surrounded by dense vapors that obstruct all radiation of violet light.

SAN FRANCISCO, May 20, 1898.